**FOR** **IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Dec. 7, 2018

**CONTACT:**

Angie Doss

Chief External Relations Officer

adoss@sunbeamfamilyservices.org

405-609-2311 (o) | 619-347-4057 (c)

[Download a photo from the Infant Mental Health program.](https://www.flickr.com/photos/sunbeamfamilyservices/30242028117/in/album-72157702194177755/)

**Sunbeam Offers Innovative Infant- Early Mental Health Training**

**Specialized Support Helps Infants, Young Children and Parents Thrive**

**(OKLAHOMA CITY)** – Sunbeam Family Services is committed to supporting the mental health and well-being of Oklahoma infants, young children and their caregivers. The nonprofit’s goal is to mitigate the impact of stress and trauma for infants and children prenatally through age five. Sunbeam’s Infant-Early Mental Health program supports the child’s health and well-being, strengthens family relationships and prevents further significant health and mental health issues.

Infant-Early Mental Health refers to how well a child develops socially and emotionally from birth to three years. The brain develops 85 percent of all the neural connections it will need in life before the age of six. This means that experiences have a much stronger impact, for good or bad, on infants and very young children.

“Sunbeam is one of the only organizations in central Oklahoma with a focus on Infant-Early Mental Health specialization,” said Amy Chlouber, LPC-S, director of Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health. “In Oklahoma, 65 percent of infants and young children have at least one risk factor known to impact healthy development.”

Stress and trauma have devastating impact on the developing brain of an infant or young child. A nurturing caregiving relationship with at least one adult can help buffer the impact of stress and trauma in the earliest years. Young children without healthy attachments are at much greater risk for delinquency, substance abuse and depression into adulthood.

Sunbeam’s Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health program offers therapy services by licensed and licensed-eligible therapists to families with infants, very young children and their caregivers prenatally through age five. Therapists receive ongoing specialized training and reflective consultation to support them in providing high quality, relationship focused family therapy services.

Sunbeam offers free, specialized Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health training to the community. Discussion topics include: child development, attachment, adverse childhood experiences, the impact of trauma on the developing brain and the importance of nurturing relationships in the earliest years to promote and support health and well-being.

For more information about Sunbeam’s Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health program, contact Amy Chlouber, LPC-S, at 405-609-1958 or email achlouber@sunbeamfamilyservices.org.

This holiday season, Sunbeam Family Services is asking the community to join them in raising $87,000 to help children, families and seniors learn, grow, heal and thrive. The nonprofit’s mission is to provide people of all ages with help, hope, and the opportunity to succeed through Early Childhood, Foster Care, Counseling and Senior Services. For more information, visit sunbeamfamilyservices.org or call 405-609-8994.

###

About Sunbeam Family Services

Sunbeam helps children, families and seniors learn, grow, heal and thrive. Founded in 1907, Sunbeam Family Services is one of Oklahoma’s longest serving nonprofits, providing help, hope and the opportunity to succeed to people of all ages and all stages of life in central Oklahoma through Early Childhood, Counseling, Foster Care and Senior Services. To learn more, call 405-528-7721, visit sunbeamfamilyservices.org, or follow them on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.